

SENATE RESOLUTION 84  
By Cohen

A RESOLUTION to honor Edgar Meyer, Mark O'Connor and Béla Fleck for their many valuable contributions to "The New Nashville Sound".

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to pay tribute to those multi-talented musicians and composers who have expanded Nashville's musical horizons to include practically every genre of music, including classical, jazz, country, bluegrass and folk; and

WHEREAS, no musician or composer exemplifies this eclectic approach better than the Terrific Trio of Edgar Meyer, Mark O'Connor and Béla Fleck; and

WHEREAS, Edgar Meyer is a master instrumentalist, vibrant performer and innovative composer who has been recognized as "quite simply, the best bassist alive"; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Meyer has been a student of the bass since the tender age of five; his virtuosity and musicianship in combination with his gift for composition have brought him to the fore, where he is appreciated by a vast, varied audience; and

WHEREAS, he is the first bassist to receive the Avery Fisher Career Grant; he performs regularly with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, of which he is a member; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Meyer has appeared as a performer and composer at Aspen, Caramoor, Chamber Music Northwest, Marlboro and Tanglewood; he was a regular guest at the

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Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival from 1985-1993, composing six works for the festival during that time; and

WHEREAS, he has composed several concertos and quintets that prominently feature the bass; his Double Concerto for Bass and Cello earned him a grant from the Meet the Composer/Reader's Digest Commissioning Program; and

WHEREAS, fruitful collaborations are the cornerstone of Mr. Meyer's work, and none has been more productive and aesthetically successful than his collaborations with Mark O'Connor and Béla Fleck; and

WHEREAS, from 1986-1992, these three extraordinary musicians and composers pooled their tremendous talents as members of the progressive bluegrass band, "Strength in Numbers," which also included such luminaries as Sam Bush and Jerry Douglas; and

WHEREAS, Mark O'Connor has been hailed as a phenomenon whose technique and instrumental mastery transcend musical styles; and

WHEREAS, Mr. O'Connor claims legions of fans from virtually every musical genre; the range of his talent is outstanding; and

WHEREAS, this remarkable gentleman was named the Country Music Association's "Musician of the Year" for six consecutive years; he is a six-time Grammy Award nominee and a Grammy Award winner for his ground breaking *New Nashville Cats* album; and

WHEREAS, a member of the faculty of the Blair School of Music of Vanderbilt University, Mr. O'Connor is a regular guest of musical festivals and concert series; he has appeared numerous times at Carnegie Hall, including the United Nations' Time for Peace Concert and among the world's greatest violinists at "Fiddlefest" where he shared the stage with Isaac Stern, Itzhak Perlman and Midori, among others; and

WHEREAS, recently, Mr. O'Connor, Mr. Meyer and Yo-Yo Ma have been wildly and widely acclaimed for their collaboration on *Appalachian Waltz*, which soared to the top of Billboard's Classical chart and remained there for sixteen weeks; and

WHEREAS, *Appalachian Waltz* and *Liberty!*, Mr. O'Connor's second album for Sony, are the only albums to appear both on classical charts and on roots music's Americana charts, a tribute to the wide appeal of his music and the diversity of his fans; and

WHEREAS, in another collaboration, Mr. O'Connor, Mr. Meyer and Mr. Ma will record Mr. Meyer's Double Concerto for Bass and Cello with the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra in September 1998; and

WHEREAS, Béla Fleck is a master innovator who has redefined the banjo for an entire generation; although he enjoys tremendous popularity among music aficionados of all tastes, he remains on the cutting edge of today's progressive music scene; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Fleck truly stands at the forefront of acoustic music; he has performed and recorded with top bands, including his exuberantly unique Flecktones and has released several critically acclaimed solo albums; and

WHEREAS, this multi-talented musician and composer joined *Frets* magazine's "Gallery of Greats" in the late 1980s after being voted "Best Banjoist" for five consecutive years; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Fleck also won the 1993 and 1994 *Jazziz* Readers' Polls Awards, and he has received twelve Grammy nominations; and

WHEREAS, in 1997, Béla Fleck and the Flecktones were awarded their first Grammy for *The Sinister Minister* in the Best Pop Instrumental Category and, in 1996, Mr. Fleck won a Grammy for his featured performance in *Hightower*; and

WHEREAS, Béla Fleck is truly committed to bringing his music directly to the people, as he and the Flecktones perform over 200 sold-out live shows annually all across the globe, often with stellar special guests; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Fleck is also involved in an inventive new trio project with Mr. Meyer and mandolin player Mike Marshall; the trio plays original compositions that marry bluegrass, classical and other traditional styles; and

WHEREAS, in October 1997, the trio opened the 1997-1998 season of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center in conjunction with the release of the album *Uncommon Ritual*; and

WHEREAS, Edgar Meyer, Mark O'Connor and Béla Fleck are three brilliant musicians and composers who have garnered a great deal of positive attention for Nashville's music industry, and they should be specially recognized for bringing diversity to the music emanating from the Music City; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE-HUNDREDTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, That we hereby honor and commend Edgar Meyer, Mark O'Connor and Béla Fleck for their many valuable contributions to the creation, definition and popularity of "The New Nashville Sound".

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we extend to these three exceptionally gifted gentlemen our best wishes for much continued success in their future endeavors, both individually and as collaborators.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That appropriate copies of this resolution be prepared for presentation to Edgar Meyer, Mark O'Connor and Béla Fleck as a token of our esteem.